

Please amend the second full paragraph on page 12 to read as follows:

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A While the invention has been described in terms of preferred embodiments, it will be understood, of course, that the invention is not limited thereto since modifications may be made by those skilled in the art, particularly in light of the foregoing teachings. For example, the silicon-doped amorphous coating may be used to improve the wear resistance on the wear surfaces of a wide variety of spray application equipment other than rotary paint atomizers, including, for example, compressed air spray guns.

In The Claims: ✓

Please withdraw claims 1-7.

Please add new claims 25-34 to read as follows:

25. (New) A method for improving wear resistance of the outer spraying surface of spray application equipment, the method comprising the steps of:

preparing the outer spraying surface of the spray application equipment;

applying a wear resistant coating to said outer spraying surface.

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26. (New) The method according to claim 25, wherein the step of preparing the outer spraying surface of the spray application equipment comprises the steps of:

cleaning said outer spraying surface;

etching said outer spraying surface;

rinsing said outer spraying surface;

drying said outer spraying surface; and

atomically cleaning said outer spraying surface.

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27. (New) The method according to claim 26, wherein the step of cleaning said outer spraying surface comprises the steps of:

cleaning said outer spraying surface with a soap solution;
cleaning said outer spraying surface with water; and
cleaning said outer spraying surface with solvent.

28. (New) The method according to claim 26, wherein the step of etching said outer spraying surface comprises the steps of:

etching said outer spraying surface with a 5% solution of sodium hydroxide for a predetermined time;
rinsing said outer spraying surface with water; and
etching said outer spraying surface with a 1% nitric acid solution for a second predetermined time under ultrasonic agitation.

29. (New) The method according to claim 26, wherein the step of drying said outer spraying surface comprises the step of:

blow drying said outer spraying surface with air; and
placing the spray application equipment in a vacuum pressure chamber for a predetermined time at a predetermined pressure.

30. (New) The method according to claim 26, wherein the step of atomically cleaning said outer spraying surface comprises the steps of:

atomically cleaning said outer spraying surface by argon bombardment at 200 volts;

atomically cleaning said outer spraying surface by argon bombardment at 500 volts; and

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atomically cleaning said outer spraying surface by argon bombardment at 200 volts.

31. (New) The method according to claim 25, wherein the step of applying a wear resistant coating to said outer spraying surface comprises the steps of:

placing the spray application equipment in a chamber containing a power source and a gaseous mixture of hydrocarbons and silicon-doped hydrocarbons;

applying a predetermined frequency and voltage bias from said power source for a predetermined time to coat the spray application equipment to a predetermined film thickness at a predetermined silicon composition.

32. (New) The method according to claim 31, wherein the step of placing the spray application equipment in a chamber containing a power source and a gaseous mixture of hydrocarbons and silicon-doped hydrocarbons comprises the step of:

placing the spray application equipment in a chamber containing a power source and a gaseous mixture of methane and tetramethylsilane.

33. (New) The method of claim 25 further comprising the step of applying an adhesion promoter to said outer spraying surface of the spray application equipment prior to the step of applying a wear resistant coating to said outer spraying surface.

34. (New) The method according to claim 25, wherein the step of applying an adhesion promoter coating to said outer spraying surface comprises the step of sputtering a layer of chrome on said outer spraying surface to a predetermined thickness.

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